



Trained community members constructing a sand dam

SAND DAM PROGRAMME IN RURAL SUDAN

PROJECT SUMMARY

PROJECT Sand Dam Programme

OBJECTIVE To construct sand dams in rural villages in Sudan, in order to improve water security, improve food security (through increased water for irrigation and livestock) and decrease the incidences of conflict over water

LOCATION Rural villages in Sudan (primarily in South Kordofan State so far)

TIMESPAN Ongoing: approximately one or two sand dams per dry season (November—March)

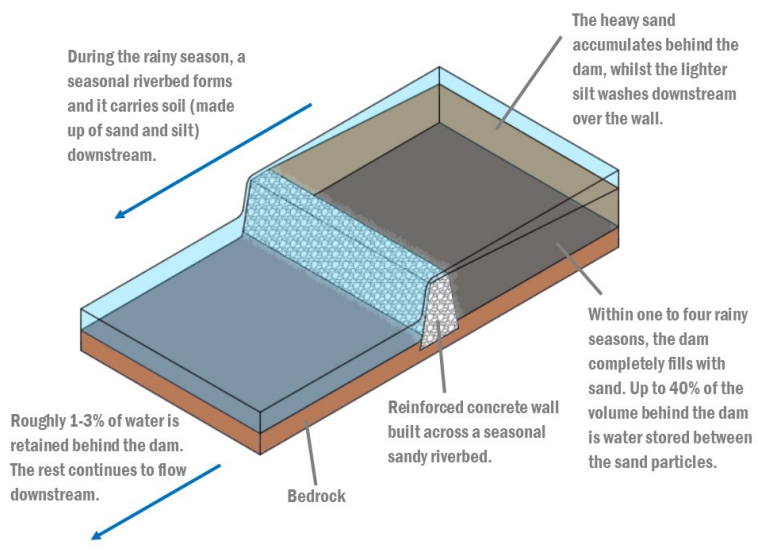
PARTNER SOS Sahel Sudan

BACKGROUND

With our sand dam programme, we aim to combat water insecurity in rural villages in Sudan. In 2009, SOS Sahel conducted a study into the feasibility of transferring successful water technologies from Kenya to Sudan, in the form of sand dams. SOS Sahel built the first sand dams in Sudan using Kenyan sand dam experts to teach the technology to our local water experts and also offer technical training to local youths. SOS Sahel have since successfully built a series of sand dams across rural villages in South Kordofan and we plan to continue building between one and two sand dams each year, expanding activities into North Darfur soon.

WHAT IS A SAND DAM?

Sand dams are simple, low-cost and low-maintenance water harvesting structures. In Sudan, where there is often a high availability of water during the rainy season, but a water crisis in the dry season, sand dams allow water to be conserved sustainably. They provide a clean, local water supply throughout the year. Water from heavy downpours is no longer lost, but stored in sand for year round use. It is then abstracted from the sand by using traditional scoop holes or pipes leading to taps or wells.



COMMUNITY BENEFITS

- Sand dams conserve water in a way that replenishes the ground water and encourages the long-term sustainability of ecosystems and water supplies; vegetation grows and land is more fertile, reversing the effects of desertification.
- The sand stored in sand dams filters the water clean for abstraction, protects it from evaporation and contamination with animal faeces, and prevents the breeding of insects and parasites. This contributes to a reduction of malarial infection and diarrhoea.

- Competition for water between communities is lessened, leading to reduced conflict.
- Those that usually shoulder the responsibility for household water provision (commonly women and children) no longer need to gather water from distant and often contaminated water sources.
- Communities now have more time to spend as they please. They have increased water and time to productively farm, reducing food security and raising household incomes.